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Borough of East Retford

Annual Report for 1943

BY

W. C. DAVIDSON

M.D., CH.B., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

RET FORD
WHARTONS LTD., GROVE STREET
1944



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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area	4,657 acres
Registrar General's estimate of resident population								
						mid-year 1940	...	15,900
Number of inhabited houses mid-year 1944						...	...	4,413
Rateable Value mid-year 1944					£94,991
Sum represented by a Penny Rate					£387/5/8d.

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BOROUGH OF EAST RETFORD

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
YORKSHIRE PENNY BANK BUILDINGS,
MARKET PLACE, RETFORD.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report on the health of the Borough during the year 1943. Again the report is brief, owing to present conditions ; it shows only an outline of the work carried out by the Public Health Department during the year.

The report has been compiled in accordance with the instructions contained in the Ministry of Health Circular No. 10/44.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. CAMPBELL DAVIDSON
Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area..... 4,657 acres

*Registrar-General's estimate of resident population mid-
year 1940.....15,900

Number of inhabited houses mid-year 1940.....4,413

Rateable Value (1st April, 1943).....£94,991

Sum represented by a Penny Rate.....£376 18s. 10d.

*It has been considered inadvisable at present to publish
later figures.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS—	Total	M	F
Legitimate	268	142	126
Illegitimate.. .. .	21	11	10
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population ..			18.15
Birth Rate of England & Wales per 1,000 population..			16.5

STILL BIRTHS—	Total	M	F
Legitimate	5	1	4
Illegitimate.. .. .	1	Nil	1
Rate per 1,000 TOTAL births.. .. .			20.34
Rate per 1,000 estimated population			0.38
Rate per 1,000 population of England & Wales			0.51

DEATHS—	Total	M	F
	216	107	109
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population ..			13.57
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population in England and Wales			12.1

The preparation and issue of the Areal Comparability Factor is being suspended under present conditions, so that the Death Rate adjusted accordingly cannot be given.

MATERNAL MORTALITY—

Deaths from Puerperal Causes :

Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis..Nil.

Other maternal causes..1.

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	3.39
Maternal Mortality for England & Wales per 1,000 live births	2.29

INFANTILE MORTALITY—

	Total	M	F
Deaths of legitimate infants under 1 year..4	2	2	
Deaths of illegitimate infants under 1 year 1	1	0	
Death Rate of all infants per 1,000 live births			17.30

Death Rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	14.92
Death Rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	47.62
Infantile Mortality Rate for England & Wales per 1,000 live births	49.

MORTALITY—

The deaths include those of 39 persons in institutions outside the Borough : 22 males and 17 females.

The above rates are calculated on the estimated population given by the Registrar General.

The causes of death were :

Whooping Cough	1
Diphtheria	2
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system ..	9
Other forms of tuberculosis.. .. .	2
Influenza	8
Measles	1
Acute polio-encephalitis and polio-myelitis	1
Cancer of buccal cavity and oesophagus (m) and uterus (f)	2
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	8
Cancer of breast	1
Cancer of all other sites	10
Diabetes	2
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	29
Heart disease.. .. .	38
Other diseases of circulatory system.. ..	14
Bronchitis	14
Pneumonia	7
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	4
Appendicitis	1
Other digestive diseases	3
Nephritis	10
Other maternal causes	1
Premature birth	1
Congenital malformations, birth injuries, infantile diseases	1
Suicide	2
Road traffic accidents	2
Other violent causes	7
All other causes	35

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

WAR TIME DAY NURSERY. The Nursery has functioned well throughout the year and seems to have met a real need in the town. There have been difficulties with regard to staffing of the nursery, replacement having proved to be a difficult matter, and also with regard to outbreaks of infectious disease, when it was necessary to restrict admissions and to exclude cases and contacts.

There has been a lengthy waiting list of parents desiring admission of their children, and the question of extending the nursery has received serious consideration. As the demand for places is so great it would seem that extension of the existing nursery or the construction of an additional nursery is necessary ; of the two alternatives the former would probably meet the case

SCABIES. A very considerable amount of time has had to be spent during the year in the control of this disease. It is not considered that there has been any serious increase in its incidence, but continued watch has to be kept. and arrangements made to deal with cases and contacts as they are ascertained.

Full use has been made of the treatment centres for children, and for adults, with satisfactory results.

It has not been necessary to resort to compulsory cleansing under the Scabies Order, 1941, in any case.

Frequent inspection of the school children together with investigation of home circumstances of cases by the School Nurses have helped in the control of the disease and in this connection the Sanitary Inspector has been most helpful.

During the year 158 cases were notified to, or ascertained by the Public Health Department. Of these 2 were treated at home, 1 in institutions and 155 at the Scabies treatment centres.

Steam disinfestation of clothing and bedding was carried out as required. Recent research has shown that disinfestation of bedding, etc., is hardly necessary at all if efficient personal treatment is carried out.

DIPHTHERIA. IMMUNISATION. During the year this work has been continued. Local and national advertising in the press, distribution of literature, poster displays, etc., have all again been brought into use.

During 1943, 230 children under 5 years of age and 195 between the ages of 5 and 15 years were completely immunised. The percentage of children of these age groups estimated to have been immunised at 31st December, 1943, were 73.71% and 86.82%. Recent figures supplied with regard to the estimated population at these ages lead one to believe that these figures may be an under-estimate of the real position. However, the situation in Retford with regard to immunisation is not at all unsatisfactory.

It should be noted that 9 cases of diphtheria in children under 15 years of age were notified during the year, that 1 death occurred in non-immunised children and that NO deaths from diphtheria occurred in children who had been immunised.

Each year about 250 children should reach the age of one year, and if this number of year-old children could annually be immunised diphtheria should be much less of a problem than it has been in the past.

INFESTATION BY HEAD LICE. Ministry of Health Circular 2831. The recommendations set out in this circular have been brought to the notice of the Health Visitor who has carried them out in so far as her many duties have allowed.

Suitable combs are available on loan at the clinics, and Lethane Hair Oil has been used with good effect, when necessary.

Since 1st September 1943, the Health Visitor has visited 1415 children. Of these only 5 were found to be infested by head lice ; these heads were dealt with by the mothers, under the supervision of the Health Visitor, and are now clean.

The matter does not seem to be a very serious one as regards the infants and young children in Retford. The mothers on the whole are very careful about the cleanliness of their children's heads.

No other changes of importance in the provision or functioning of the health services occurred during the year.

CHILD WELFARE AND ANTE-NATAL CLINIC.

Number of sessions held during 1943..254.

Number of sessions attended by the Medical Officer..218.

Number of examinations made (children)..1844.

Number of examinations made (mothers)..2232.

Average number of children and mothers examined per session,
18.7.

Number of individual children attended Centre..961.

Number of visits paid by children to the Centre :

Under 1 year .. 5687

1 to 5 years .. 4317—Total 10,004.

Number of individual ante-natal cases attended :

Evacuees 390

Retford 257—Total 647.

Number of individual post-natal cases attended :..27.

Visits paid by Health Visitor to :

Children under 1 year of age ..1459

Children between 1 and 5 years 1415—Total 2874

SERVICES OF A CONSULTANT. During the year 8 expectant and nursing mothers (including 3 evacuees) were referred for Mr. Stacey's opinion.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY. The water supply of the Borough is derived from deep wells ; the supply underground is unlimited, but no surface storage is available, with the result that almost continuous pumping is necessary to satisfy the demand.

The whole population of the Borough is supplied with piped water to the houses so that no stand-pipes are used. The supply is constant, but in certain parts of the town lack of pressure is troublesome, methods of combatting this difficulty are at the present time under consideration.

The water is good as regards quality. Samples are examined bacteriologically each week, the reports on these samples having been uniformly good. Full chemical analysis is carried out from time to time, and the reports have shown the water to be satisfactory. The water is chlorinated at the Works.

With regard to the question of plumbo-solvency it is not considered that this is a matter likely to be troublesome, but for many years galvanised wrought iron tubing has been recommended for water supplies.

SANITARY INSPECTION. The work was well supervised by the Inspector and was efficiently carried out.

BOROUGH OF EAST RETFORD

TUBERCULOSIS, 1943

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—2 ..	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
2—3 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
3—4 ..	—	—	3	—	—	—	1	—
4—5 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
5—10 ..	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
10—15 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20 ..	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
20—35 ..	6	3	—	—	1	3	—	—
35—45 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—65 ..	1	3	—	1	—	3	—	—
65 & over	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
	10	10	7	1	3	6	1	1

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Borough of East Retford

	Total Notified	Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths	South Ward	East Ward	West Ward
Scarlet Fever	36	12 (a)	2	11	12	13
Diphtheria	12	31 (a)	—	4	3	5
Measles	284	—	—	92	63	129
Whooping Cough	58	—	—	24	10	24
Erysipelas	7	1 (a)	—	2	1	4
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	2	2 (a)	—	1	—	1
Pneumonia	74	5 (b)	14	27	16	31
Acute-Polio Encephalitis	1	1 (a)	1	—	—	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	20	13 (c), 1 (d)	9	8	8	4
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	8	1 (c)	2	3	3	2
	502	66	28	172	116	214

(a) North Carlton Isolation Hospital

(b) Retford and District Hospital

(c) Ransom Sanatorium, Rainworth

(d) Basford County Infirmary

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR for 1943

TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

SIR,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you my report on the work done during the year 1943.

48 complaints were received and the premises visited, nuisances being found in all but four cases.

105 informal notices asking for the abatement of nuisances were served, and in 15 cases these were followed up by statutory notices under the Public Health Acts.

It was still very difficult to get repairs executed by the builders both because of shortage of labour and of some materials. A case in point is the almost complete absence of new washing coppers. The Corporation took this matter up with the Government Department concerned but no improvement in the supply of coppers has resulted. The dustbins on offer were of very low quality and their life can only be very brief. Really vital repairs such as leaky house roofs and spoutings, defective drains, etc., were carried out, and on the whole the houses in the town are in a reasonable state.

A much greater trouble is the shortage of houses. There is quite an appreciable amount of overcrowding in the town and little can be done to help the unfortunate sufferers. The Corporation have endeavoured to let the few houses on their estates which became vacant to the families whose need was the greatest but only the provision of substantial numbers of new houses will remedy the trouble.

The common lodging house is kept under surveillance and on the whole is found to be in good order. Under war conditions the house has been fairly full, although owing to shortage of bed clothes the difficulties of the keeper of the house have not diminished.

A few cases of houses infested with bugs, fleas, or lice occurred during the year. All bug and flea infestations were dealt with by steaming the bedding, and either spraying with zaldecide or fumigating with a proprietary fumigant, or doing

both. Satisfactory results were obtained in most cases, but some difficulty was experienced in bug infestations where the bedroom walls were plaster on frame-work. Cases of body lice were dealt with by steaming the bedding and clothing, whilst the infested persons were bathed. This treatment was quite effective.

FOOD INSPECTION. This work takes up a great part of my time. There are two Ministry of Food slaughterhouses in the town in which meat for the Boroughs of Worksop and Retford and the Rural Districts of Worksop and Retford is killed. All the carcasses and organs were examined at the slaughterhouses and this meant many late evenings and early mornings at the slaughterhouses. I was assisted in this work by Mr. J. Hunt, Asst. Sanitary Inspector to the Retford Rural District Council.

The animals slaughtered in 1943 were :

Cattle 2905.	Sheep ..16,431
Calves.. 559	Pigs .. 385

This total of 20,280 compares with 17,568 slaughtered in 1942, and 16,665 in 1941.

The percentages of animals found to be tuberculous have been :

	1941	1942	1943
Cattle	22.5%	23.4%	31.1%
Pigs	8.8%	11.9%	17.4%
Calves.. ..	1.2%	1.0%	1.0%

The total weight of meat condemned at the slaughterhouses was 165,120 lbs. which is considerably above that of last year. There is little doubt that a serious increase in bovine tuberculosis has taken place during the war, but the public can rest assured that the meat they are consuming is a disease free and wholesome food. All condemned meat is sent to a firm who sterilize it and convert it into animal food, fertilizers, etc.

The centralized slaughtering that has been the rule throughout the war period does provide for a thorough inspection of the meat, and has also eliminated the nuisances which did arise from the use of slaughterhouses in congested areas of the town.

There is much work in the inspection of foods at the shops. All traders regularly submit any doubtful food for my inspection and I append below a list of foods condemned, usually for decomposition :

Livers, tails and other meat organs	..	..	..	966 lbs.
Bacon and ham	..	..	..	..401 lbs.
Butter, lard and other fats	..	..	..	..124 lbs.
Fish	..	..	..	..393 lbs.
Sausage	..	..	..	.. 64 lbs.
Brussel Sprouts	..	..	..	.. 63 cwts.
Cheese	..	..	..	.. 32 lbs.
Jam	..	..	..	.. 59 lbs.
Flour	..	..	..	.. 22 lbs.
Sugar	..	..	..	.. 92 lbs.
Rice	..	..	..	..250 lbs.
Cake	..	..	..	.. 11 lbs.
Packeted Foods	..	..	..	..191 pkts.
Eggs	..	..	..	..298
Mixed tinned foods	..	..	..	2018 tins

During the year 1943, 207 visits were paid to dairies and cowsheds in the Borough. There are 20 milk producers registered in the Borough of whom 5 are accredited and 13 are also registered as retailers. There are 13 others registered as retailers of milk, 5 of whom have dairies in the Borough and 8 of whom are producers in the rural area, who retail in the Borough from their rural dairies. I therefore have 25 cowsheds and dairies under my supervision which is the smallest number in the last 20 years.

There were two outstanding events in the milk trade during the year, viz., the completion of the new pasteurising plant by the Co-operative Society Ltd., and the rationalisation of the milk distributors. We have also helped in the testing of producer-retailers milk under the scheme of The Ministry of Agriculture.

There is considerable controversy in the milk trade over the merits or otherwise of pasteurisation of milk, but I am of opinion that at the present time there is no real practical alternative to pasteurisation if the public is to have a good and safe milk supply. Bovine tuberculosis has increased during the last few years and it will be many years before it is eliminated from our dairy herds. Under these circumstances who could advocate the supply of raw milk to our schools. Accredited milk is not guaranteed free from tuberculosis and there is no tuberculin-tested milk on sale in Retford.

32 samples of pasteurised milk were obtained and submitted for test. Both the phosphatase test and the bacterial count were satisfactory in all cases.

96 samples of raw milk were obtained for the resazurin test and of these 80 were in A grade, 12 in B, and 4 in C.

The bakehouses and other food manufacturing premises are inspected at intervals, and no serious contraventions were discovered.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE. These cases are all visited promptly upon notification, enquiries made and contacts traced wherever possible. The year was a good one and the work lighter than has been the case for some time. Visits are made by me to cases of scabies upon request of the Medical Officer of Health. Occasionally some adult members of the household show a reluctance to come to the cleansing station, but this was overcome in all cases after a visit of explanation.

CLEANSING. This important work has, as usual, taken up a considerable proportion of my time. I am responsible for the collection and disposal of house refuse and salvage, and for the cleansing of the streets. We have suffered from the prevailing shortage of labour, and in the autumn all the men had a spell off work owing to influenza. This resulted in the collection of house refuse getting into arrears and we were not able to get straight again during the winter.

There was also an increase in the amount of refuse to be collected, which was due to the more prevalent use of coke as a household fuel. Whilst most of the public were helpful and very patient there were a few householders who sent in complaints almost daily. The interval between collections of house refuse was about three weeks at the end of the year, whereas refuse had been collected fortnightly for the year up to November.

During the year the amount of salvage to be collected fell away somewhat but not as much as we had expected. As we have no baling plant capable of dealing with tins the salvage of these was discontinued, and we concentrated upon paper, textiles, bones, rubber, glass, and pig food. The weight of salvage sold in 1943 was 416 tons compared with 502 tons of salvage sold in 1942.

The streets and markets were cleansed as usual by men working on the beat system. The men are mostly aged, but worked well throughout the year, and the work was satisfactory.

Some of the outlying roads are cleansed by the County Council and this body is also responsible for the emptying of street gullies in County Council roads. The sweepings have little or no manurial value and are disposed of on the tip where they are useful for covering the refuse.

V I S I T S .

To Slaughterhouses	600
To Infectious Disease	97
To Premises re Nuisances	158
To Properties under notice	93
To Dairies and Cowsheds	207
To Bakehouses	22
To Shops re Food Inspections	367
To Offensive Trades	16
To Premises re Rats	57
To Factories and Workshops	16
Re House Refuse and Salvage	269
To Public Mortuaries	18
Miscellaneous Visits.. .. .	39
	<hr/>
Total ..	1,959
	<hr/>

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

FRANK R. SMITH,

Sanitary Inspector.



